DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 231 756 SP 022 361

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TITLE Teacher Competency Assessment: New Directions in NTE.
PUB DATE Nov 82
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual National Inservice Conference of the National Council of States on Inservice Education (7th, Atlanta, GA, November 19-23, 1982).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Information Analyses (070) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Classroom Techniques; Higher Education; Program Evaluation; *Standardized Tests; Teacher Certification; *Teacher Effectiveness; Teacher Evaluation; *Test Construction; *Test Format; *Test Items
IDENTIFIERS *National Teacher Examinations

ABSTRACT

A review of the National Teacher Examinations (NTE) has focused on the Commons Examinations component. The Commons, now named the National Teacher Examinations Core Battery, tests general knowledge, communication skills, and professional knowledge in three separate tests. Users may select portions of the tests that best suit their needs at various checkpoints in the teacher's development, thus achieving a greater flexibility in test administration and a more unified measure of achievement. A revision of the tests' contents places new emphasis on the beginning teacher's knowledge of the context and process of teaching. Long-range revision plans call for the development of additional tests in classroom management, human relations skills, instructional design, and observation skills. Reviews of professional literature on classroom management have been prepared, and a large number of managerial strategies (62) have been identified and described. Various test formats are now being examined. (JD)

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ED231756

TEACHER COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT: NEW DIRECTIONS IN NTE

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In 1979, the National Teacher Examinations Policy Council became responsible for establishing program policy involving the development, administration, and use of the National Teacher Examinations. Educational Testing Service remained responsible for developing and administering the Examinations in accord with the policies established by the Council.

The Council, a twelve-member group composed of representative of the profession, is to ensure that the National Teacher Examinations operate in the best interests of prospective teachers and the teacher education institutions that prepare them, the state departments of education that certify them, and the school districts that select them. Consequently, the Council is to provide a set of tests designed to assist teacher education institutions in program evaluation, state departments of education in certification, and school districts in the selection of qualified prospective teachers. Toward this end, the Council is also responsible for supporting a research and development program intended to improve the Examinations. To assist in this task, the Council formed a Research and Development Committee.

The Research and Development Committee is a six-member group that serves in an advisory capacity to the Policy Council. The Committee has responsibility for offering guidance in the determination of short-term and long-term research and development goals and priorities for the National Teacher Examinations.

Paper presented at the Seventh Annual National Inservice Conference of the National Council of States on Inservice Education, Atlanta, November 1982.

SP 022 361

Short-term research and development efforts--those for the two year period, 1981 and 1982--focused primarily on revising the Common Examinations. The Common Examinations had consisted of a test in professional education and three test in general education. The Professional Education test provided a standardized, objective measure of the professional training typical of most four-year teacher education programs; it included questions covering knowledge and skills in three broad areas: psychological foundations, social foundations, and teaching principles and practices. The three tests in general education were: Written English Expression; Social Studies, Literature, and the Fine Arts; and Science and Mathematics. All four tests were combined in one book and taken in a single session, most often by college seniors or recent teacher education graduates.

The short-term developmental activities related to the Common Examinations are best viewed as leading to substantial changes in one sense, and interim modification in another sense. As part of a long-range effort, the activities of the 1981-1982 period set the tone for a new approach to the testing of teachers in that teaching has been reconceptualized as a series of professional developments on a career continuum. The development of a teacher is seen as involving precareer preparation, preservice training, entry-level skills and competencies development, and continuing inservice education leading to the mastery of skills in speciifed area of professional interest and talent. All levels of development should involve opportunities for feedback on knowledge and performance variables. This conceptualization calls for information on strengths and weaknesses of prospective teachers to be provided for the purpose of screening, counseling, and career guidance. Standardized tests are seen as an effective means by which to obtain such information.

Short-term efforts have involved restructuring the present examinations, the Common Examinations, and extending them to include more job-related knowledges and skills commonly needed by all prospective teachers. The notion that the test should assess teacher education knowledges and skills necessary--although not sufficient--for all teachers has remained the same. Teacher knowledges and skills, however, have been broadened to include competencies required for successful application of knowledge within a classroom milieu. While these knowledges are essential for minimum entry, they do not preclude additional on-the-job requirements which may be more appropriately assessed in other than paper-pencil, multiple choice modes, and which may be more realistically determined at a local

level.

The three major areas of revision that were implemented in the 1981-1982 period were: (1) modularization; (2) flexible administrative patterns; and (3) revitalization of content specifications. Modularization involved the development of independent tests in professional education, general education, and a series of other tests concerned with communication skills. Modularization allows users to select portions of the test that best suit their needs at various checkpoints in the teacher's development and permits future modifications without disrupting the test scales.

Flexible administrative patterns naturally follow modularization and the subsequent development of a number of optional modules. For example, the general education test may be used as a basic literacy test to screen prospective teacher education students; the professional education test may be used to assess the achievement of the teacher education student after completion of an approved program of study in teacher education, or earlier to provide information about a prospective graduate or a particular teacher education program; and a test of communication skills could be used in conjunction with either of the other two tests, or independently to assess reading, writing, language usage, and listening skills needed for teaching. On the other hand, the tests could be used as a certification requirement for all entry-level teachers. Specific state or local school districts may have their own preferences for optional tests that would help them in the certification, selection, and placement of teachers.

Revision of the content specifications was accomplished through a process that began with a reconceptualization of the teacher's role. This resulted in a conceptualization of the beginning teacher as an intelligent, informed decision-maker. The content specifications focus on those knowledges from which the beginning teacher draws and those cognitive processes that the beginning teacher utilizes in the decision-making process. The role of the teacher is viewed as encompassing two broad dimensions: the context of teaching and the process of teaching. That is, the beginning teacher is expected to have knowledge about and utilize cognitive processes relevant to the process of teaching and is expected to have knowledge about and utilize cognitive processes relevant to the context of teaching.

In addition to the test-development aspects, short-term activities have been concerned with selection validation research. While this research will extend into the long-term development cycle, it was seen as essential to begin to explore issues relating to job analysis. Job analysis, in some form, will be a necessary step in the validation of selection tests. The complexity and specificity of teaching, and the multiple criteria required to evaluate teaching effectiveness render job analysis extremely difficult. Efforts in this regard are at the beginning stage.

The short-term efforts yielded a revised Commons, now named the National Teacher Examinations Core Battery. The Core Battery consists of three new tests: the Test of General Knowledge; the Test of Communication Skills; and the Test of Professional Knowledge. The General Knowledge and Communication Skills tests focus on the knowledge and cognitive skills that are essential for a well-educated, literate person to function and communicate effectively. The Test of General Knowledge assesses knowledge in four areas: literature and fine arts; mathematics; science; and social studies. The Test of Communication Skills assesses ability in three areas: listening; reading; and writing. The Professional Knowledge test emphasizes the professional knowledge considered necessary for all entry-level teachers, whatever their fields of specialization. The content--as noted earlier in this paper--focuses on knowledge relevant to the context and process of teaching that the beginning teacher is expected to have.

The Core Battery is designed so that each of the tests may be taken independently. This modularization allows users to select the test or tests that best suit their needs. It is anticipated that the General Knowledge and Communication Skills test will be used to screen prospective teacher education students whole the Professional Knowledge test will be used to assess achievement after program completion. As planned, therefore, the Core Battery is modularized, provides for flexible administrative patterns, and represents a very significant reconceptualization.

The long-range plans of the Research and Development Committee include the development of additional tests in areas identified as particularly critical for the certification and selection of beginning teachers. To date, several possible areas have been discussed: classroom management; human relations skills; instructional design; and observation skills. This paper focuses on present

efforts with regard to the first of these--the development of a test of entry-level classroom management competency.

The development of a test that would be used to assess the classroom management skills of beginning teachers has been viewed as a four to five year process consisting of a series of carefully planned stages. The first several of these stages have been completed. The preliminary stage was one that resulted in a commitment to the development of a test that emphasizes the teacher's ability to apply "job-related" knowledge and skills--knowledge and skills directly linked to the teaching act--and the utilization of test formats that closely simulate the teaching setting.

The development of the classroom management test is being guided by a series of assumptions:

1. There is a sufficient body of knowledge based on research and practice to support the development of a separate test on classroom management as a part of a national testing program.
2. The development of the test will be long-range; the goal to build the highest quality instrument will take precedence over timing, if that choice becomes necessary.
3. The test will be an additional but indenpendent test offering in the Core Battery; it will be geared to the beginning, entry-level teacher.
4. The test will be intended primarily for preservice use by teacher education students who have had opportunity to practice management skills in classroom situations.
5. The test will incorporate but not be limited by existing teacher education curricula.
6. The test will reflect knowledges and skills thought to be of practical significance to the classroom teacher.
7. The test will be appropriate for beginning teachers of all levels and subject-matter specialities.
8. The validation of the test content will draw upon appropriate input from classroom teachers, teacher educators, and educational researchers.
9. The test will primarily be a paper-and-pencil test, and will include other types of formats as endorsed by the Policy Council.
10. The developmental efforts in regard to the test will reflect broad-based input that considers diverse perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds.
11. The test will be considered only one possible measure of classroom management competence; the developmental efforts will include a statement describing what the test can and cannot measure.

With these assumptions in mind, the next stage of the process resulted in a definition of the term classroom management that made a distinction between the

managerial and instructional dimensions of teaching. At this stage, managerial strategies were viewed as those that fostered appropriate student behavior and discouraged inappropriate student behavior.

The third stage represents an effort to begin to specify test content. Believing that it is critical that test content specifications be drawn from diverse sources--sound professional practice, well-grounded theories, and empirical research--extensive reviews of the literature were commissioned by the Committee.

The first of these reviews was a review of the teacher education literature conducted by Wilford A. Weber and Linda A. Roff at the University of Houston. That review produced two reports--a summary report (Weber and Roff, 1981) and a technical report (Weber and Roff, 1982).

The second of the reviews examined the research literature. This review was conducted by John Crawford of the Oklahoma City Public Schools and Catherine Robinson of Canyon Landing, Inc. and the San Diego Mission School. The results of that review were presented in a report made to the Research and Development Committee (Crawford and Robinson, 1981).

These two reviews resulted in the identification and description of a wide range of managerial strategies. Summaries of these reviews will be widely disseminated in the first of a series of monographs so that teacher educators, teachers, and others concerned about teacher competency might have an opportunity to provide input regarding the adequacy of the reviews as a basis for test content specification. This paper provides a listing of the strategies identified by the two reviews.

Weber and Roff identified sixty-two major strategies which they categorized into eight categories. The following is a listing of those sixty-two strategies:

1. Authoritarian strategies.
   a. Establishing and enforcing rules.
   b. Issuing commands, directives, and orders.
   c. Utilizing mild desists.
   d. Utilizing proximity control.
   e. Utilizing isolation and exclusion.
2. Behavior modification strategies.
   a. Utilizing positive reinforcement.
   b. Utilizing praise and encouragement.

c. Utilizing modeling.
d. Utilizing shaping.
e. Utilizing token economy systems.
f. Utilizing contingency contracting.
g. Utilizing group contingencies.
h. Reinforcing incompatible alternatives.
i. Utilizing behavioral counseling.
j. Utilizing self-monitoring.
k. Utilizing cues, prompts, and signals.
l. Utilizing negative reinforcement.
m. Administering punishment.
n. Utilizing overcorrection.
o. Utilizing response cost.
p. Utilizing negative practice.
q. Utilizing satiation.
r. Utilizing extinction.
s. Utilizing fading.
t. Utilizing time out.

3. Cookbook strategies.
   a. Following tried and true prescriptions.
4. Group process strategies.
   a. Exhibiting withitness behaviors.
   b. Exhibiting overlapping behaviors.
   c. Maintaining group focus.
   d. Fostering reasonable, clearly understood expectations.
   e. Sharing leadership.
   f. Establishing and maintaining group morale.
   g. Developing cooperation.
   h. Fostering group cohesiveness.
   i. Promoting productive group norms.
   j. Involving students in decision making.
   k. Employing classroom meetings.
   l. Resolving conflicts through discussion and negotiation.
   m. Employing role playing.
5. Instructional strategies.
   a. Providing interesting, relevant, and appropriate curriculum and instruction.

b. Establishing classroom routines.
c. Giving clear directions.
d. Employing effective movement management.
e. Utilizing interest boosting.
f. Providing hurdle help.
g. Planning for environmental changes.
h. Planning and modifying the classroom environment.
i. Restructuring the situation.

6. Intimidation strategies.
   a. Utilizing harsh reprimands.
   b. Employing threats.
   c. Utilizing physical restraint.
   d. Administering corporal punishment.
7. Permissive strategy.
   a. Maximizing student freedom.
8. Socioemotional climate strategies.
   a. Fostering positive interpersonal relationships.
   b. Communicating genuineness.
   c. Communicating empathic understanding.
   d. Communicating acceptance.
   e. Utilizing effective communication.
   f. Exhibiting active listening.
   g. Utilizing humor.
   h. Employing logical consequences.
   i. Utilizing reality therapy.

Crawford and Robinson provided the following outline of the content domain of effective classroom management:

1. Teacher characteristics.
   a. Teacher withitness.
   b. Teacher overlapping.
   c. Teacher ability to maintain smoothness and momentum.
   d. Teacher ability to build and maintain rapport.
   e. Teacher ego strength.
   f. Teacher accuracy in diagnosing student skill levels.
   g. Teacher ability to translate diagnosis into prescription of appropriate tasks.

h. Teacher values concerning emphasis on academic progress of students.

2. Teachers' behavior and classroom environment characteristics for dealing with student misbehaviors.
   a. Teacher "desist" events.
      (1) Avoidance of target errors.
      (2) Avoidance of timing errors.
      (3) Avoidance of strong negative reactions.
      (4) Use of calm warnings.
   b. Teacher monitoring.
      (1) Teacher movement around the classroom.
      (2) Arrangemetn of physical aspects of room to facilitate monitoring.
   c. Teacher interpersonal skills: allow students to tell their side of the story.
   d. Teacher holding of students responsible for misbehaviors.
   e. Teacher use of socialization and positive problem solving instead of punishment.
3. Rules, systems, and teacher behaviors for increasing student engagement.
   a. Early in the school year.
      (1) Communication of expectations to students.
      (2) Teacher acceptance of student ideas; teacher display of positive affect.
      (3) Make consequences clear to students.
   b. Efficiency.
      (1) Minimize interruptions of lesson; maintain continuity of lesson's signal system.
      (2) Develop automatic mechanisms for handling students' personal and procedural needs.
      (3) Involve students in housekeeping.
      (4) Use of blackboard.
      (5) Avoid long transitions.
   c. Let students know what to do upon completion of assignments.
   d. Use of room arrangement to accommodate traffic patterns, lines, separation of quiet and noisy areas.
   e. Group alerting; teacher maintains suspense, alerts non-performers.
   f. Accountability.
   g. Rules.
      (1) Teach the rules, routines, and expectations.
      (2) Involve students in rule production.

(3) Be consistent in using reward and punishment.

h. Direct students to relevant stimuli; provide clues and overviews.

i. Avoid spending too much time with one student at a time.

j. Encourage students' efforts to maintain involvement; use of self-management and self-regulation systems.

4. Behavior modification procedures related to effective classroom management.

a. Teachers should know operant principles--positive reinforcement, extinction, negative reinforcement, and punishment.

b. Effective classroom methods for increasing or maintaining desirable behavior.

(1) Modeling.

(2) Token reinforcement.

(3) Contingent teacher attention.

(4) Programmed instruction.

(5) Shaping through the use of successive approximations.

c. Effective methods for decreasing the incidence of undesired behavior.

(1) Extinction--withdrawal of attention or positive reinforcement (when misbehavior is not severe).

(2) Punishment--should be contingent, quick, used sparingly, not not physical, and not while punisher is angry or emotional.

d. Use of verbal praise.

(1) Sparingly.

(2) Contingent on truly superior performance.

(3) With specificity about the behavior being praised.

(4) Sincerely and appropriately for the the situational context.

5. The impact of the developmental level of the students on effective classroom management.

a. Kohlberg's theory.

(1) Young children (elementary grades) define morality by the consequences of actions.

(2) Older children seek approval of peers and adults and recognize authority.

(3) High school age adolescents recognize democratic rule and self-accepted principles.

b. Piaget's theory.

(1) Mutual acceptance of rules and rigid adherence to rules by young children.

(2) Junior and senior high school age children come to understand the need for rules, the nature of rules, and that rules can be altered by mutual consent.

(3) Children progress from an early view of culpability that links blame with the magnitude of the act to a later stage where intentionality is considered.

As noted earlier in this paper, it is the intent that the monograph (Weber and Gage, in press) that contains summaries of the two reviews be disseminated to teachers, teacher educators, and others concerned about teacher competency so that the profession might have an opportunity to judge the adequacy of the reviews as a basis for test content specification.

Concurrent with the third stage of the test development process--efforts to spcify test content--there have been efforts to provide greater specificity with regard to earlier activities to define the managerial dimension of teaching. This fourth stage has yielded a definition that views classroom management as a process that is intended to establish and maintain high levels of student engagement in classroom activities while minimizing disruptive student behavior; further, classroom management is seen as having both preactive and interactive components. Preactive components include: gathering and processing information about the teaching setting and about alternative managerial strategies; identifying managerial expectations; planning managerial strategies; and evaluating managerial effectiveness and making such changes as necessary. Interactive components include: teaching appropriate student behavior; maintaining appropriate student behavior; and changing inappropriate student behavior.

The fifth stage is focusing on test format development. The intent is to utilize a format that recognizes the interactive nature of teaching and the importance this places on the teacher's ability to perceive and process multiple information inputs. The ultimate goal is to develop an item format that is responsibe to concerns about reliability, validity, feasibility, and credibility. The ability of various formats to meet these criteria is being explored.

A new Core Battery has been developed and is being used. The development of a test to assess classroom management competence is underway. A preliminary conceptualization of classroom management has bee generated. Reviews of the professional literature have been prepared and a large number of managerial strategies have been identified and described. Various test formats are being examined. Future plans call for open review and dialogue among teacher educators and other members of the profession who are concerned about the quality of teaching and teacher education programs. Reactions will be solicited in order

to ensure that the classroom management test that emerges from this process might serve to improve teacher competency assessment--and teacher education programs.

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